



State of Wisconsin | DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

## Straight Lake State Park & Wildlife Area May 2008 Newsletter

Dear Friend of Straight Lake State Park and Wildlife Area,

This Newsletter is being sent to parties interested in Straight Lake State Park and Wildlife Area, and the development of the Master Plan. This Newsletter includes articles on the following topics:

- Notice of the release of the Draft Vision and Goals and a range of 3 possible Management Alternatives to receive public comment and a June 11, 2008 Informational Public Open House.
- Review about Straight Lake State Park and Wildlife Area
- A Review of the Master Planning Process and the Public Involvement Plan
- The Draft Vision Statement and Property Goals provided for comment.
- The Management Alternatives including a Summary and Map of each provided for comment.
- The Master Plan's Proposed "Project Boundary" provided for comment.
- What's Next?

### **Submitting Your Comments:**

Written comments on the Draft Vision Statement, Property Goals, 3 Management Alternatives and the proposed Project Boundary may be submitted by: attending the public open house, or by email, FAX, or mail directed to the contact person below.

PAUL KOOIKER, at WDNR, PO Box 367, Grantsburg WI 54840-0367, by FAX at 715-463-5806 or by e-mail at: [paul.kooiker@wi.gov](mailto:paul.kooiker@wi.gov)  
Comments must be submitted no later than June 18, 2008.

### **Please Join Us!**

#### **Straight Lake State Park & Wildlife Area- Master Plan**

#### **Public Information Open House #2**

**Date and Time:** Wednesday, June 11, 2008  
from 6- 8 PM

**Location:** The "DBS" Building, 300 1st Street, Luck, WI.

#### **Objective:**

The objective of this meeting is to share and receive comment on the Draft Vision Statement, Property Goals, a range of three possible "Alternatives" to the future management of the park / wildlife area and the property's proposed "Project Boundary".

#### **Meeting Format**

Participants may arrive at their convenience between 6:00 – 8:00 PM. As the meeting will be an open house / informal format with no formal group presentation or question and answer, participants may arrive at any time between 6-8PM.

Visitors will be invited to circulate around the room to a series of "discussion stations" on a variety of topics.

The discussion stations will include several exhibits, including; the Draft Vision Statement and Property Goals, each of the 3 possible management "Alternatives" and the property boundary.

Each station will be staffed by a member of DNR's master planning team. Guests will be invited to talk one-on-one with the team members who will explain the topic and answer any questions.

Participants will be invited to write their comments on sheets provided and leave them at the meeting or they may send their comments in following the meeting. Parties who are not able to attend the Open House may also submit written comments before June 18<sup>th</sup> (see "Submitting Your Comments").

## Review About Straight Lake State Park and Wildlife Area

Straight Lake State Park and Wildlife Area are currently two separately designated properties that are adjacent to each other. The State Park and the State Wildlife Area are both approximately 1,400 acres, totaling 2,800 acres. The properties are located in northwestern Wisconsin in Polk County, and include portions of the townships of Luck and Bone Lake.

In 2002 the Department prepared a Feasibility Study to examine the potential purchase of the property and the creation of a State Wildlife Area and State Park. The Feasibility Study also proposed that a portion of the land to be dedicated as an Ice Age Trail Area and another part of the property be dedicated as a State Natural Area. With approval from Governor Doyle and the Natural Resources Board, the state acquired the property in 2005.

The two properties include one natural and four man-made lakes totaling 329 acres of surface water. There are 222 acres of high quality wetlands, as well as perched bogs, ephemeral ponds, and fens that support a diversity of plant and animal communities.

The project area also contains one of the most distinctive glacier-formed tunnel surface channels in the Midwest. This feature is located on the southeast side of the project area along the Straight River.

For additional information about the property please refer to: the November 2006 Newsletter, the 2002 Feasibility Study and the May 2008 "Regional & Property Analysis" available on the master plan's web page.

[www.dnr.wi.gov/master\\_planning](http://www.dnr.wi.gov/master_planning).

Then click on **Straight Lake** in the left hand column.

## The Straight Lake State Park and Wildlife Area- "Regional & Property Analysis Report"

The DNR's master planning team has recently finalized the "Regional & Property Analysis Report" which is a companion document to the master plan. The Regional and Property Analysis (RPA) for the Straight Lake State Park and Wildlife Area (SLSP&WA) provides baseline information on the property as well as information on how the property fits into or relates to its larger ecological and social context. The RPA serves as an important source of information for the planning team and the public. Those interested in the more technical information on the property may view or download a copy at the master plan's web site: [www.dnr.wi.gov/master\\_planning](http://www.dnr.wi.gov/master_planning).

Then click on **Straight Lake** in the left hand column. Hard copies may be requested by contacting Tim Miller at 715. 532. 4372.

## Review of the Master Plan Development and Public Involvement Process

The public master planning process began in spring of 2007. The length of time needed to complete each step of the Master Plan's development and to obtain approval by the Natural Resources Board will depend on the range and complexity of issues that arise in the planning process.

Interested parties have a number of opportunities to provide input at each major step in the master planning process. The Master Planning Team also uses the following methods of attempting to reach and inform interested or affected parties, agencies, organizations and the representatives of jurisdictional governing bodies, including

- Mailings
- Public Information Meetings
- News Releases
- An Internet Web Page
- Government to Government Consulting

We look forward to hearing from you!

## How the DNR Uses Your Input in the Planning Process

To develop an effective master plan, the Department listens to many voices. Neighboring landowners, concerned individuals, conservation groups, recreation users, commercial interests, elected officials, tribal representatives, and other government agencies are all encouraged to participate. Input received at each major step in the Master Plan's development will be considered as the Plan is developed.

During this process, decisions will be made based on:

- the land's resource capabilities,
- the role of the property in its local and regional context,
- applicable federal and state laws, administrative /DNR Codes, DNR design standards
- policies and missions of the State Park and Wildlife programs,
- consultations with tribal representatives,
- consideration of public input,
- the professional expertise of DNR managers.

A broad range of interests will be listened to and considered in the development of the Master Plan. Final decision making responsibility and authority rests with the DNR's citizen policy-making Natural Resources Board.

## **The Master Planning / Public Involvement Process:**

Considering the research and data gathered in preparation for the Master Plan, and public input received at the 6-7-05 public information meeting, DNR staff has developed a Draft Vision Statement, a set of Draft Property Goals, and a range of possible Management Alternatives for the future management and development of the properties. The purpose of these Alternatives is solely to serve as the basis for soliciting input.

At this point in the process, the public has an opportunity to provide input on the Draft Vision Statement, Draft Property Goals, and possible Management Alternatives, by attending a public informational open house (see page 1), by mail, e-mail, FAX or through the Master Plan web site.

Considering the input received during Step 1, and with additional specific technical input from DNR's team of specialists, DNR staff will develop a Draft Master Plan and Environmental Assessment, including a map of the property with text describing the specific management and development of the property and assessing any significant environmental affects.

The public will again have an opportunity to provide input on the more detailed Draft Master Plan and Environmental Assessment at a public meeting, by mail, or through the Master Plan web site.

Considering the input received during Step 2, DNR staff will again revise the Draft Master Plan and Environmental Assessment prior to submitting the plan to the Natural Resources Board for review.

The Natural Resources Board reviews the Draft Master Plan and Environmental Assessment and makes an approval decision on the plan. At the NRB meeting, the public has a final opportunity to comment at the Natural Resources Board meeting before the Board renders a decision.

## **The Draft Vision Statement and Property Goals**

Based on the initial public comments, the 2002 Feasibility Study, the "Regional and Property Analysis Report", DNR staff technical input and other considerations (indicated in the previous article), the master planning team has prepared the following Draft Vision Statement, and Property Goals. These form the skeletal framework, set the "sideboards" for the range of "Management Alternatives" and guide the development Master Plan.

**The following Draft Vision Statement and Property Goals are provided for public review and comment:**

## **Draft Vision Statement**

The Straight Lake State Park & Wildlife Area conserves a rare combination of natural features for present and future generations. The site's location in rural Polk County offers an atmosphere of solitude and remoteness where visitors may experience a connection with the natural landscape. The Straight Lake property's many unique features include; scenic undeveloped waters, wetlands, large blocks of oak and northern hardwood forests, habitats harboring rare species, and the Straight River "tunnel channel", a glacial geologic feature of statewide significance. Because of the site's geologic importance, a segment of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail runs through the property, providing visitors with a semi-primitive recreational experience. The property also offers areas to enjoy a variety of other high quality non-motorized recreational activities and nature education. Management practices, recreational facility development and public use of the property are sustainable and within the ecological and social carrying capacity of the property and its recreational settings.

## **Draft Property Goals**

The following property goals are presented in no particular order of priority:

### **ECOSYSTEM / HABITAT MANAGEMENT GOALS**

1. Provide high quality native forest communities that range from old closed canopy forest habitats for "species of greatest conservation need" such as Cerulean Warbler and Red-shouldered Hawk, to early successional forest habitats.
2. Provide ecologically functional wetland and grassland habitat adjacent to the flowages for; waterfowl and grassland dependant birds, and other associated species.
3. Provide an ecological reference site consisting of northern hardwood / oak forest with embedded ephemeral ponds, and aquatic/wetland features.
4. Provide high quality wetland and aquatic communities as habitat for waterfowl, fish, and other wetland and aquatic wildlife
5. Provide and maintain the high ecological integrity of the property's natural communities and habitats, particularly by minimizing the introduction and spread of invasive exotic species.
6. Provide areas of geological, archaeological, or cultural significance.

## RECREATION / INTERPRETIVE GOALS

1. Provide recreational experiences of solitude and remoteness in a semi-remote, semi-primitive setting for a range of low-impact, non-motorized recreational uses, such as; hiking, camping, canoeing, kayaking, wildlife viewing, hunting large and small game, trapping and fishing.
2. Provide recreational experiences that encourage individuals and the community to become physically active in experiencing the sense of remoteness and natural character of the Straight Lake property.
3. Provide high quality recreational use facilities that maintain the natural scenic quality of the property and are compatible with ecosystem sustainability of the Straight Lake Property.
4. Provide high quality recreational experiences for hikers on the Ice Age National Scenic Trail.
5. Provide interpretive opportunities to educate visitors on the natural and cultural resources and important geologic features.

### Property Description:

Refer to the “Regional & Property Analysis” for a detailed description of the property’s physical and biological characteristics.

The following range of possible Management Alternatives have been developed based on the general intent of the preceding Vision and Goals

### A Range of 3 Possible Management Alternatives

A “Master Plan Alternative” is one of a number of **possible** approaches to the future management of the park’s resources, facilities and recreational uses. **The “Alternatives” are intended solely to explore and evaluate various theoretical approaches to managing the park’s facilities and resources.**

Each “Alternative” has been developed to illustrate a particular approach to the future management of the property. Three Alternatives have been developed that range from a conservative approach to managing the property’s resources and developing recreational facilities, to an approach that aims to more actively manage the property’s resources and maximize the park’s recreational potential.

#### All three Management Alternatives would:

- Fulfill the Draft Vision Statement and provide the qualities defined in the Draft Property Goals.
- Fit a particular property designation and any planning sideboards, and the Department’s regulations and policies.
- Implement a program of monitoring and controlling invasive exotic species.
- Be in line with property’s the ecological and physical capabilities as described in the Findings and Conclusions of the “Regional and Property Analysis”.
- Close any existing dirt roads not indicated as designated trails or service roads and allow them to re-vegetate to a forested condition.
- Be potentially financially and legally feasible.
- Be based on; scientific data, input received from the public, DNR technical specialists and property managers.
- Include and manage the property in consideration of the existing electrical transmission lines that bisect the property from east to west.

Each Master Plan Alternative consists of a written summary of the proposed management approach, anticipated results, a map of the property indicating the general land management zones and a map indicating the proposed recreational facilities and uses.

As mentioned previously, these Alternatives are presented solely for the purpose of generating discussion and are much more general than the Draft Master Plan, to be developed in the next step in the process. No decisions regarding the final management of the property have been made at this time

Public participants are invited to comment on; what they like or dislike about each Alternative or to suggest a combination of elements from different Alternatives. They are also encouraged to suggest how their preferred Alternative might be further improved.

## Alternative 1- Summary:

This Alternative proposes to retain the property's current split statutory designation with the northern half as State Wildlife Area and the southern half as State Park. This split designation was originally proposed in the "2002 Feasibility Study" and subsequently approved by the Natural Resources Board (NRB) in the property's acquisition. However, the NRB qualified that the property designations should be re-evaluated during the development of the Master Plan. This Alternative illustrates how the property would be managed if this split designation were to remain.

In terms of the range of management approaches, the development of recreational facilities in the State Park and State Wildlife Area sections of the property would provide a minimal level of development intended to provide the visitor with a sense of solitude and remoteness, while still providing the "low-impact, non-motorized uses" and "interpretive opportunities" defined in the Recreation / Interpretive Property Goals, including the key element of a continuous section of the Ice National Scenic Age Trail. The uses and facilities are illustrated on the Recreational Uses and Facilities Map. All proposed facilities and structures would have rustic character designed to blend with the natural surroundings.

The approach to resource management in both the State Park and State Wildlife Area sections of the property would illustrate a minimal amount of active vegetation management that meets the provisions of the Ecosystem / Habitat Management Property Goals, and maintains the "natural scenic quality" and other characteristics as described in the Recreation / Interpretive Property Goals.

The "Straight Lake Tamarack Fen" State Natural Area, a high quality tamarack fen, would serve as an ecological reference area and would remain in an unmanaged condition. The "Tunnel Channel Woods" State Natural Area would also serve as an ecological reference area as an example block of oak dominated northern hardwood forest with, old growth characteristics, embedded perched bogs, ephemeral ponds, and fens. This area would be passively managed to remain in a natural condition.

The upland forests would be managed to allow natural processes to occur, except for the removal of "hazard trees" and the selective thinning of the red pine plantations to create a more natural appearance. The grassland openings and the lowland / wetland areas would also be allowed to follow natural processes. The existing grassland and field crop areas surrounding the Upper, Middle and Lower Impoundments would be allowed to re-vegetate along natural pathways to a forested condition. The existing reconstructed earthen dike type dams would remain but the water levels in these impoundments would not be manipulated using the water control structures. In keeping with the Alternative 1 minimal approach, and for the purposes of discussion, the earthen dike at the east end of Straight Lake not be reconstructed to comply with applicable dam regulations and design standards, but instead the 2-3-foot high existing dike would be removed to allow the waters of Straight Lake to flow freely into Straight River.

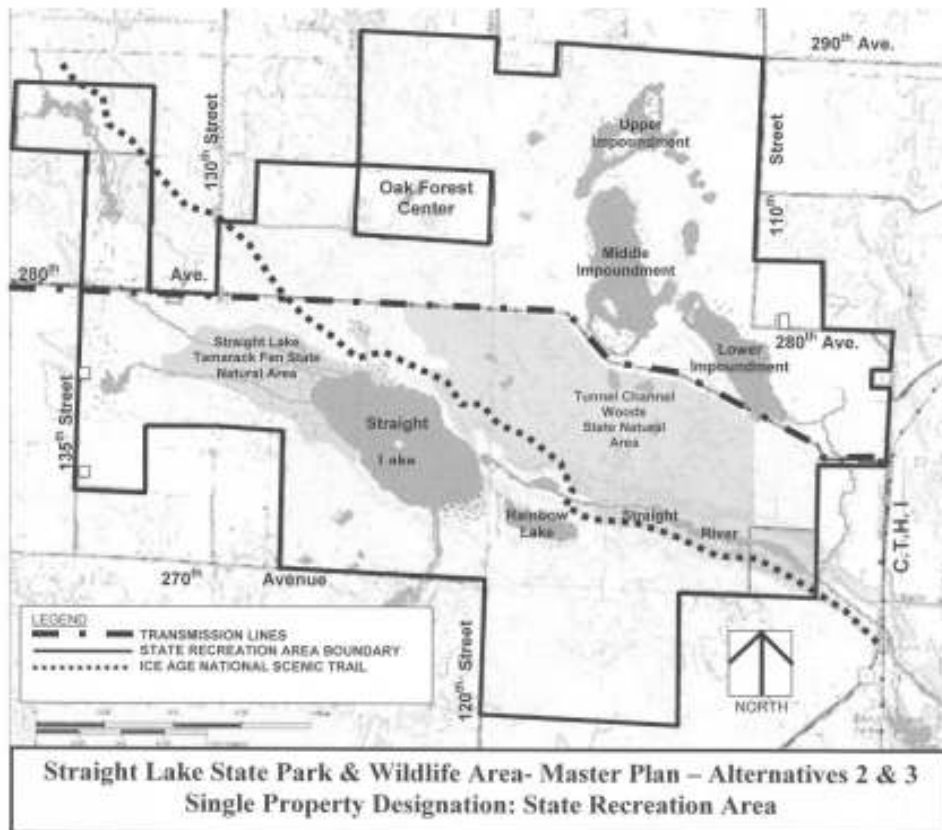
### Alternative 1- Proposed Recreational Uses and Facilities:

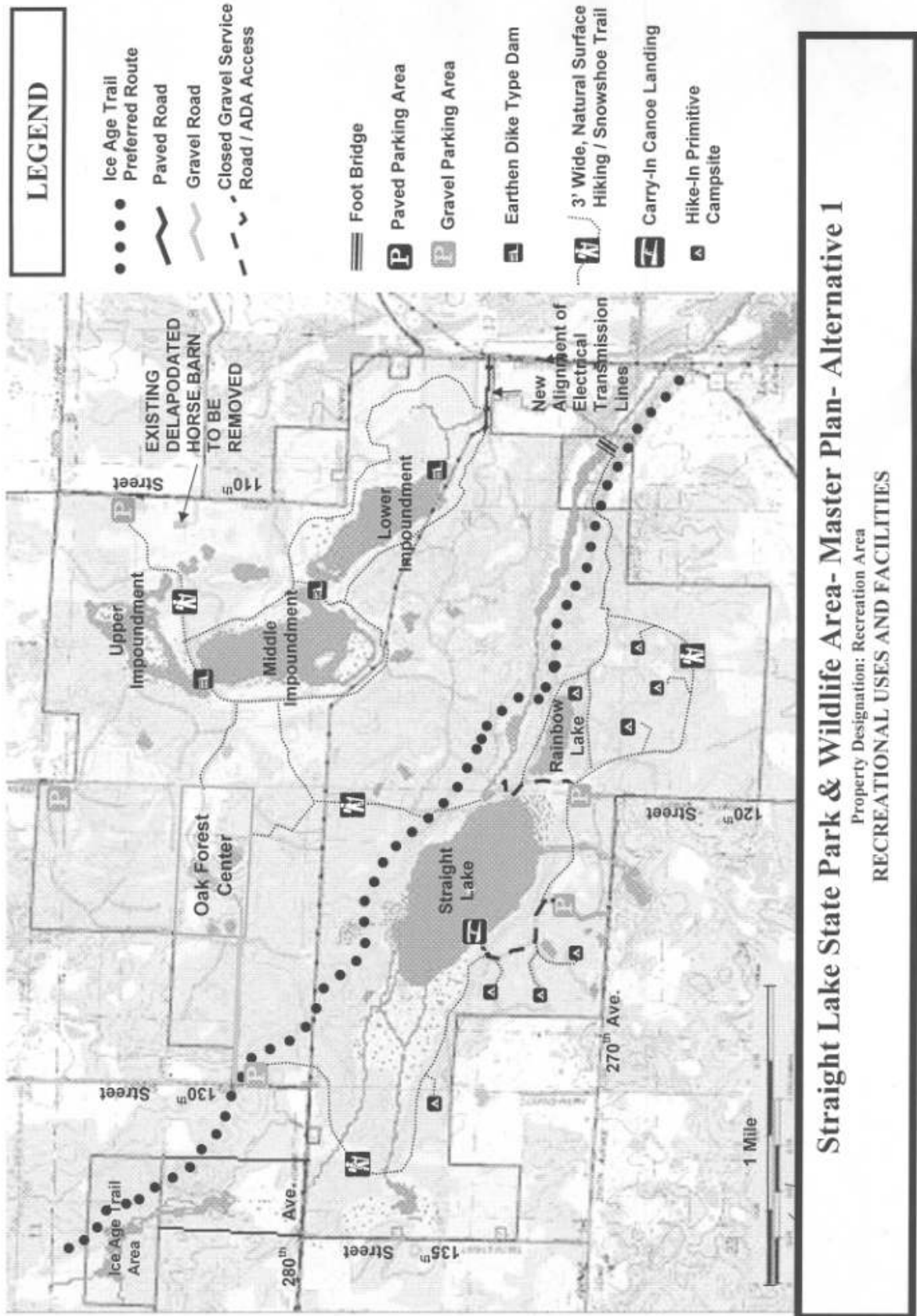
The recreational uses and facilities proposed for Alternative 1 for State Park and Wildlife Area are illustrated on the attached Alternative 1- Recreational Uses and Facilities Map. Hunting, fishing and trapping would be per the regular hunting and fishing season requirements regulations applying to a State Wildlife Area. The State Park designated portion of the property would be open to hunting with a hunting buffer zone around the recreational use areas.

### Alternative 1- Anticipated Results:

The vegetation management proposed in Alternative 1 would result in the mature upland forest currently dominated by oaks gradually succeeding to larger blocks of older composition of less oak and more maple. Consequently, it would favor wildlife species common to the type of habitat. Fallen trees would remain to decay and provide wildlife habitat. Consequently, the grassland habitat critical to waterfowl and other open grassland dependent species would be significantly reduced as the open grasslands would slowly re-vegetate to similar upland forest, but increasing the amount of closed canopy forest. The removal of the Straight Lake dike would likely lower the normal water level of Straight Lake by approximately 3-4 feet in height. The waters would recede and more of the shoreline and the island would be more exposed. The lake's fishery would be more vulnerable to winterkill due to the reduced depth. The long term cost of maintaining a dam would be reduced. It is estimated that the lake's area would be reduced by approximately 5% to 15%. The area covered by emergent aquatics would be expected to remain approximately the same with the shallowest sections of the wetland becoming exposed and gradually converting to grassland. The impacts to the Tamarack Fen SNA are unknown.

The Alternative 1 proposed recreational facilities is anticipated to result in a minimal amount of impact to the ecological communities, species of greatest conservation need, and rare, threatened or endangered resources, with the exception of reduced habitat for waterfowl, including trumpeter swan and other grassland dependent species.







## Alternative 2- Summary:

This Alternative proposes to change the property's current split statutory designation of half as State Wildlife Area and half as State Park to a single unified designation of State Recreation Area. The original split designation was originally proposed in the "2002 Feasibility Study" and approved by the Natural Resources Board (NRB) with the qualification that the Master Plan would re-evaluate the appropriateness of these and consider other possible property designations. The designation change to Recreation Area would provide a number of benefits allowing a more unified approach to managing the property and add the option of limiting the number of users in a particular management area in the event that use exceed the carrying capacity of the land and resources.

In terms of the range of management approaches, the development of recreational facilities would provide a moderate level intended to provide the visitor with a sense of solitude and remoteness, while still providing the "low-impact, non-motorized uses" and "interpretive opportunities" defined in the Recreation / Interpretive Property Goals, including the key element of a continuous section of the Ice National Scenic Age Trail.

### Proposed Resource Management:

The approach to resource management would illustrate a moderate amount of sustainable vegetation management that meets the provisions of the Ecosystem / Habitat Management Property Goals, and maintains the "natural scenic quality" of the Recreation / Interpretive Property Goals. The upland forest areas, except the "Tunnel Channel Woods" State Natural Area, would be managed according to Sustainable Forest Certification, and Best Management practices to retain the existing general composition retaining the oak dominance, but with a mosaic of stands of varying age classes. The two blocks of plantation red pine would be the selectively harvested to restore a more natural appearance.

The open grassland areas would be maintained and improved to provide habitat for waterfowl and other grassland dependent species. The impoundments would be managed and improved to also provide suitable habitat for waterfowl and provide improved habitat for wetland dependent species through the manipulation of water levels using the water control structures in the recently re-constructed earthen dike type dams. The existing Straight Lake earthen dike would be re-constructed to meet State regulations and requirements with the water level of Straight Lake remaining the same. The Straight Lake earthen dike type dam would be reconstructed to retain a natural appearance to the greatest extent possible. DNR property managers would work with tribal biologists in seeking to re-establish wild rice in the suitable aquatic habitats. The "Straight Lake Tamarack Fen" State Natural Area would serve as an ecological reference area as high quality tamarack fen and would remain in an unmanaged condition. The "Tunnel Channel Woods" State Natural Area would serve as an ecological reference area as an example block of oak dominated northern hardwood forest with old growth characteristics and embedded perched bogs, ephemeral ponds, and fens. These areas would be passively managed to remain in a natural condition.

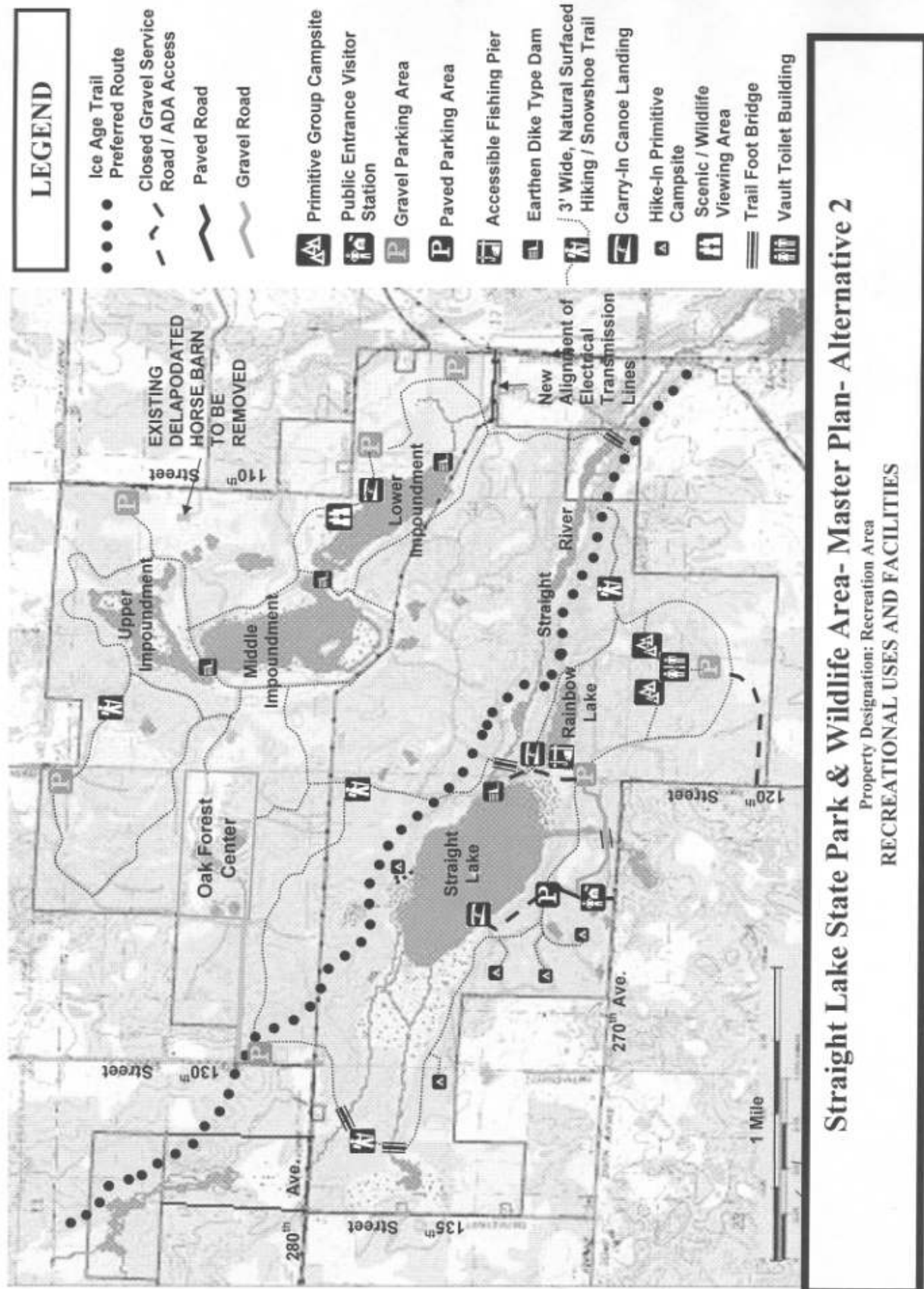
### Alternative 2- Proposed Recreational Uses and Facilities:

The recreational uses and facilities proposed for Alternative 2 are illustrated on the attached Alternative 2 Recreational Uses and Facilities Map. Hunting and Trapping would be divided into the area north of the power lines and the area to the south. The normal regulations applying to hunting, trapping and fishing would apply to the area north of the power lines. The area south of the power lines would be open to normal fishing, bow deer, gun deer hunting, and turkey hunting during the first three periods with a buffer zone around use areas. No small game hunting would be allowed south of the power lines. Management of the Straight Lake fishery would aim to provide a larger than average size fish. The Rainbow Lake (a.k.a. Boy Scout Lake) fishery management would aim to provide a warm water fishery of bass and panfish but may be vulnerable to winterkill.

### Alternative 2- Anticipated Results:

The vegetation management proposed in Alternative 2 would likely have the following results: The mature upland forest currently dominated by oaks would remain as oak dominated but with a greater diversity of age classes. There would be some short-term visual impact resulting from the areas harvested according to Forest Certification Standards in order to regenerate varying age classes of northern hardwood forest including aspen and oak. The visual impacts would be minimized by the harvesting of smaller patches of the forest to mimic natural disturbance patterns, and the use of low impact equipments and practices. The management of the open grasslands would benefit waterfowl and other grassland depended species and help to control exotic invasive species. Reconstructing the Straight Lake dike would benefit the fishery, preserve the Tamarack Fen SNA and maintain the scenic quality of the lakeshore. The area covered by emergent aquatics would be preserved and thus benefiting wetland dependent species. Rainbow Lake would likely remain unaffected.. The Alternative 2 proposed recreational facilities would likely have a minimal affect to the property's ecological resources, except in areas where impermeable paving and structures where developed, increasing the amount of storm water run-off. These areas would require the use of storm water management to mitigate these impacts.





## **Alternative 3- Summary:**

This Alternative also proposes to change the entire property designation to State Recreation Area with the same benefits as described for Alternative 2. In terms of the range of Management Alternative approaches, the development of recreational facilities would provide a more intensive level of resource management and recreational development than Alternative 2 that would aim to maximize the property's potential, while still complying with the intent of the Vision Statement, Property Goals and other established criteria including the requirements for Sustainable Forest Certification.

### Proposed Resource Management:

The approach to resource management would illustrate a maximum sustainable amount of active vegetation management that meets the provisions of the Ecosystem / Habitat Management Property Goals, and maintains the "natural scenic quality" of the Recreation / Interpretive Property Goals. The upland forest areas, except the "Tunnel Channel Woods" State Natural Area, would be managed according to Sustainable Forest Certification, and Best Management practices to regenerate oak and maintain the existing general composition, but with a mosaic of stands of varying age classes. The management would be on a shorter rotation than in Alternative 2 with larger blocks of forest managed while preserving the general scenic quality of the overall forest. The two blocks of plantation red pine would be harvested and replanted with seedlings to restore the area to a composition similar to the rest of the property.

The open grassland areas would be maintained, improved and increased in size to provide additional habitat for waterfowl and other grassland dependent species. This would require the harvesting of the fragmented blocks of upland forest surrounding the impoundments. The impoundments would be managed and improved to greater extent than in Alternative 2 to also provide more suitable habitat for waterfowl and provide improved habitat for wetland dependent species through the manipulation of water levels using the water control structures in the recently re-constructed earthen dike type dams but. The existing Straight Lake earthen dike type dam would be re-constructed to meet State regulations and requirements with the water level of Straight Lake remaining the same. The Straight Lake earthen dike type dam would be reconstructed to retain a natural appearance to the greatest extent possible. DNR property managers would work with tribal biologists in seeking to re-establish wild rice in the suitable aquatic habitats.

The "Straight Lake Tamarack Fen" State Natural Area would serve as an ecological reference area as high quality tamarack fen and would remain in an unmanaged condition. The "Tunnel Channel Woods" State Natural Area would serve as an ecological reference area as an example block of oak dominated northern hardwood forest with old growth characteristics and embedded perched bogs, ephemeral ponds, and fens. The "Tunnel Channel Woods" would be managed to retain the oak component through a minimal amount of harvesting performed to State Natural Area standards. The "Straight Lake Tamarack Fen" State Natural Area would be passively managed to remain in a natural condition.

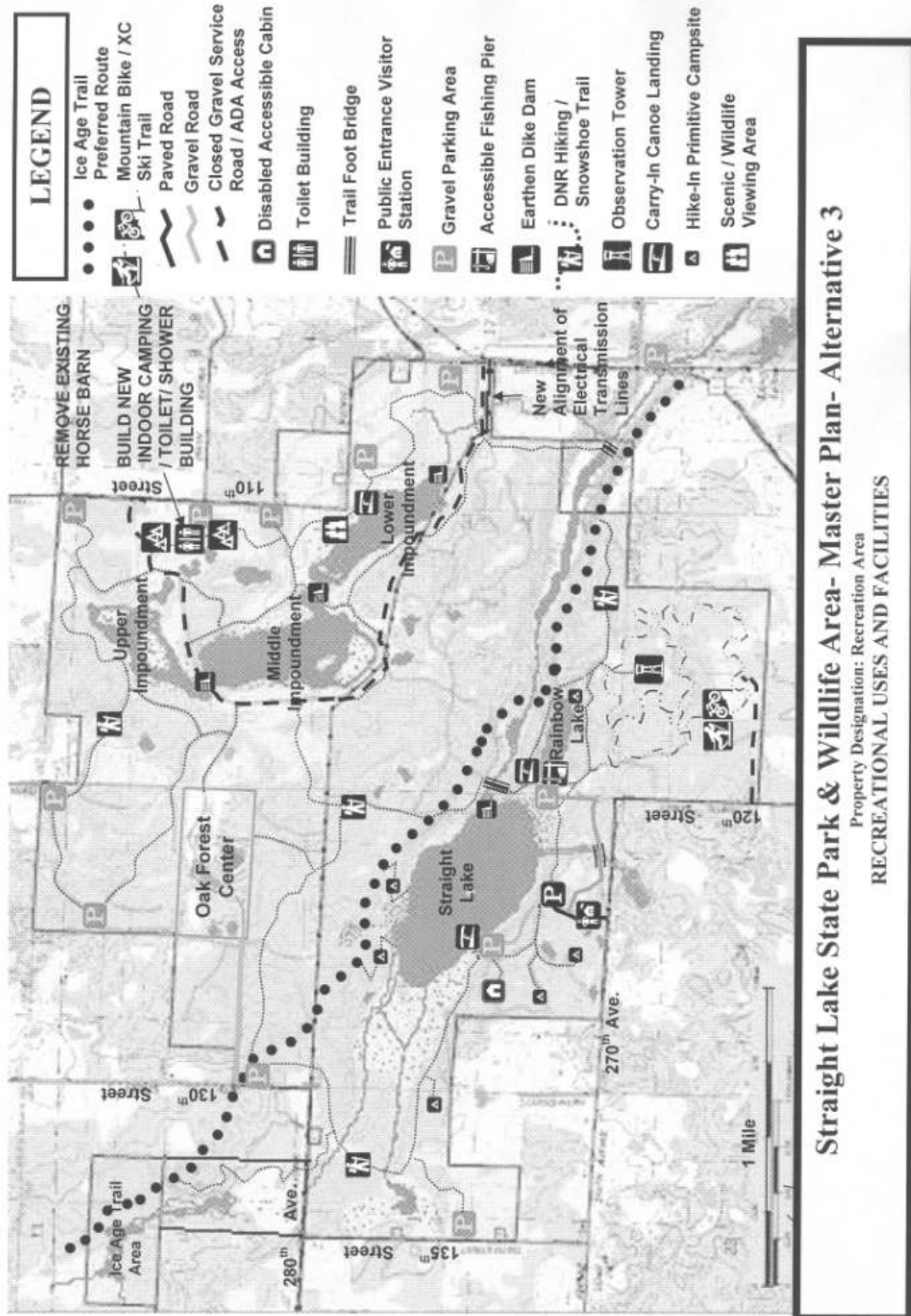
### Alternative 3- Proposed Recreational Uses and Facilities:

The recreational uses and facilities proposed for Alternative 3 are illustrated on the attached Alternative 3- Recreational Uses and Facilities Map. Hunting, Trapping and fishing would be as provided for Alternative 2.

### Alternative 3- Anticipated Results:

The vegetation management proposed in Alternative 3 would likely have the following results: The mature upland forest currently dominated by oaks would be regenerated and the overall age class of the forest would become more diverse including an increase in early successional species such as aspen. In the short-term, there would be more forest edge conditions and sections of open canopy, which may adversely impact species dependent on closed canopy forest such as the cerulean warbler. This would also apply to a lesser degree in the "Tunnel Channel Woods" SNA. The visual impacts would be minimized by the harvesting of patches of the forest to mimic natural disturbance patterns, conforming to Best Management Practices and the use of low impact equipments and practices. The harvesting of the stands of upland forest surrounding the impoundments would create a more open grasslands appearance. While benefiting the waterfowl and other grassland dependent species, a less natural scenic quality would result, particularly following controlled burns.

Reconstructing the Straight Lake dike would again benefit the fishery, preserve the Tamarack Fen SNA and maintain the scenic quality of the lakeshore. The area covered by emergent aquatics would be preserved and thus benefiting wetland dependent species. Rainbow Lake would likely remain unaffected. The Alternative 3 proposed recreational facilities would likely have a greater affect to the property's ecological resources than Alternative 2 by disturbing more land and increasing the amount of impermeable paving and structures where developed, increasing the amount vegetation clearing and storm water run-off. These areas would require the use of storm water management to mitigate these impacts.



**“Alternatives Not Analyzed in Detail”.**

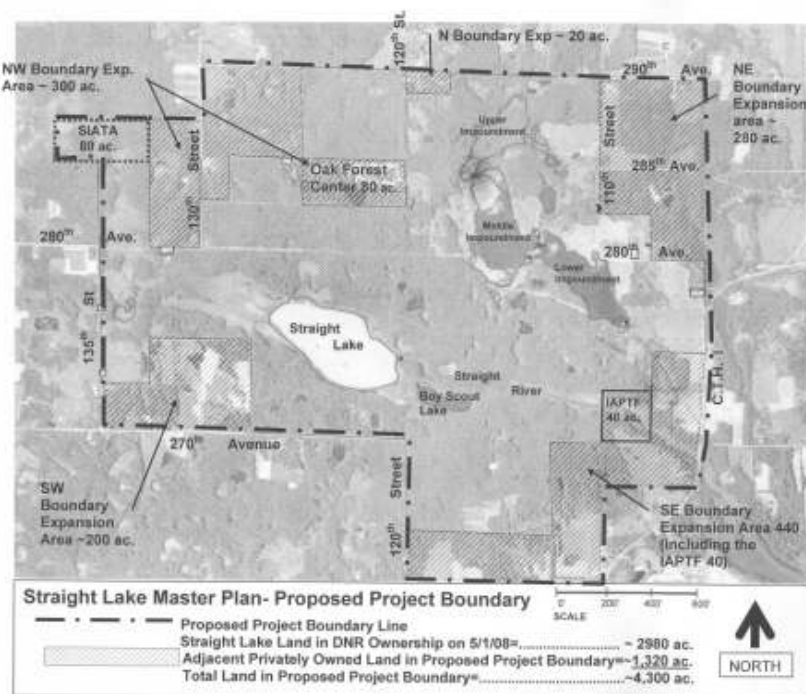
### Horse Trails:

Some public participants at the previous June 7, 2005 public meeting expressed the desire to have a system of horse trails on the property originating at the existing horse barn located on the northeast side of the property. The hope was that the dilapidated horse barn could be renovated. Since that time, a DNR engineer inspected the structure and determined that the expense of renovating would exceed the cost of a new similar structure. The master planning team evaluated the option of developing horse trails on the property in consideration of the Department standards that require destination riding areas to have at least 10-20 miles of trail. Given the size of the property and the other required facilities, there simply was not enough room to include enough trails. Riding trails were also not considered to be a critical recreational component of this property in consideration of the extensive horse trail system and recently constructed equestrian campground available at Governor Knowles State Forest located approximately 20 miles to the west

## The Property's “Project Boundary

As part of the master planning process, the DNR planning team is asked to make a recommendation to the Natural Resources Board regarding the possible expansion of the property's "Project Boundary". Typically, a DNR property's "Project Boundary" extends beyond the land currently in State ownership. The "Project Boundary" serves to identify adjacent lands that would be valuable future additions to the Straight Lake property, if they were to become available. A **project boundary** is different than a **property boundary** in that the state does not own or may never own all the property within a project boundary. Owning land within a project boundary does not change the value, who you can sell/will it to, how you manage it, nor does it give the state any access to the property. The project boundary is more of an internal system allowing the Department to purchase land from willing sellers at a future date. The project boundary merely shows where the property would like to increase it's boundary to **if** the land was available and **if** the sellers were willing.

We are interested in hearing your initial thoughts and comments on the proposal to expand the Straight Lake property's Project Boundary. DNR has contacted the owners of property in the proposed Project Boundary Area to inform them about what it means to own property within a Property "project boundary", and to get an initial reaction. Public comments will be taken into consideration before any proposal is made regarding the "project boundary" as part of the next step in the master planning process, the development of the "Draft Master Plan". Please refer to the map below indicating the area being considered to be added to the park's "project boundary"



May 2008


## What's Next?

We will welcome your comments as Master Plan takes shape. Comments may be submitted through the Master Plan's web site, by e-mail, by FAX, by mail (see address on page one) or by attending the public information meetings. Comments on the information provided in this mailing must be received by no later than June 18, 2008.

The comments we receive will be taken into consideration, and the DNR's master planning team proceeds into the next step in the Master Plan's development, preparing the Draft Master Plan and Environmental Assessment. This Plan will be much more detailed than the Alternatives and will describe the proposed management and development of the property. Once completed, this draft document will be provided to you for your review and comment. We anticipate that the Draft Master Plan will be ready for your review in September.

In the meantime, do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. Thank you for your interest in Straight Lake State Park and Wildlife Area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Paul Kooiker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

PAUL KOOIKER

Public Contact Person for the Straight Lake State Park & Wildlife Area- Master Plan  
Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources